

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently Amended) A process for removing an aqueous slurry suspension, comprising a blast medium and coating substance residues, produced when cleaning surfaces having a corrosion protection coating on the surfaces, which process comprises the steps of:

- a) suctioning the aqueous slurry suspension comprising a blast medium and coating substance residues into a receiving tank by an air feed;
- b) diluting the suspension with water under vacuum in the receiving tank;
- c) feeding the diluted suspension by means of a pump into a settling tank,
- e) d) separating a solid materials portion of the suspension from the water by sedimentation, and
- e) recycling the separated water,

wherein the suctioning of the aqueous slurry suspension into the receiving tank is conducted with a vacuum, wherein a pressure ratio of outside pressure to receiving tank pressure is 1:0.52 or more, whereby the aqueous suspension is diluted to a solid materials proportion of a maximum of about 10% by volume, and wherein the diluted suspension is fed continuously to the settling tank and overcomes a height differential of at least about 5 meters.

2. (Original) The process according to claim 1 in which the pump utilized in step c) is a centrifugal pump or diaphragm pump.

3. (Original) Process according to claim 1 in which the suspension in step b) is diluted with water to a solid materials proportion of about 5% by volume.

4. (Original) The process according to claim 2 in which the suspension in step b) is diluted with water to a solid materials proportion of about 5% by volume.

5. (Original) The process according to claim 1 in which the continuous feeding in step c) overcomes a height differential of about 30 meters or more.
6. (Original) The process according to claims 2 in which the continuous feeding in step c) overcomes a height differential of about 30 meters or more.
7. (Original) The process according to claims 3 in which the continuous feeding in step c) overcomes a height differential of about 30 meters or more.
8. (Original) The process according to claim 1 in which the pumping of step c) is accomplished in a multistage manner.
9. (Original) The process according to claim 2 in which the pumping of step c) is accomplished in a multistage manner.
10. (Original) The process according to claim 3 in which the pumping of step c) is accomplished in a multistage manner.
11. (Original) The process according to claim 4 in which the pumping of step c) is accomplished in a multistage manner.
12. (Original) The process according to claim 5 in which the pumping of step c) is accomplished in a multistage manner.
13. (Original) The process according to claim 6 in which the pumping of step c) is accomplished in a multistage manner.
14. (Original) The process according to claim 7 in which the pumping of step c) is accomplished in a multistage manner.

15. (Original) Process according to claim 1 in which the suspension in step b) is diluted with water to a solid materials proportion of from about 3% to about 10 % by volume.

16. (Original) Process according to claim 1 in which the receiving tank has a vacuum of at least 0.5 bar with respect to atmospheric pressure.

17. (Original) Process according to claim 1 in which the suspension in step a) prior to dilution has a solid materials proportion of from about 10% to about 40 % by volume.

18. (Currently Amended) A process for removing an aqueous slurry suspension, comprising a blast medium and coating substance residues, produced when cleaning surfaces having a corrosion protection coating on the surfaces, which process comprises the steps of:

- a) suctioning the aqueous slurry suspension comprising a blast medium and coating substance residues into a receiving tank by an air feed, with a diaphragm pump of about 6 bar and a hose of about 40 meters;
- b) diluting the suspension with water under vacuum in the receiving tank;
- c) feeding the diluted suspension by means of a pump into a settling tank,
- d) separating a solids solid materials portion of the suspension from the water by sedimentation, and
- e) recycling the separated water,

wherein the suctioning of the aqueous slurry suspension into the receiving tank is conducted with a vacuum, wherein a pressure ratio of outside pressure to receiving tank pressure is 1:0.52 or more, whereby the aqueous suspension is diluted to a solid materials proportion of a maximum of about 10% by volume, and wherein the diluted suspension is fed continuously to the settling tank overcomes a height differential of about 30 meters.

19. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for removing an aqueous slurry suspension, comprising a blast medium and coating substance residues, produced when cleaning surfaces having a corrosion protection coating on the surfaces which comprisces:

a) a device for suctioning the aqueous slurry suspension comprising a blast medium and coating substance residues into a receiving tank by an air feed;  
b) a device for diluting the suspension with water;  
c) a device for feeding the diluted suspension by means of a pump into a settling tank,  
c) a device for separating a solids materials portion of the suspension from the water by sedimentation, and  
c) a device for recycling the separated water,  
wherein the device for suctioning of the aqueous slurry suspension into the receiving tank is comprises a vacuum generator which generates a pressure ratio of outside pressure to receiving tank pressure of 1:0.52 or more, and wherein the aqueous suspension is diluted to a solid materials proportion of a maximum of about 10% by volume, and wherein the diluted suspension is capable of being fed continuously to the settling tank and capable of overcoming a height differential of at least about 5 meters.

20. (Withdrawn) The apparatus according to claim 19 wherein the pump is a centrifugal pump or diaphragm pump.

21. (Withdrawn) The apparatus according to claim 19 wherein the pump comprises a plurality of pumping stages.